

Na Text Cards

Print on card stock. Cut same width by necessary lengths.

Box 1 Roman Empire

Map of the Roman Empire

Starting in Rome, the Roman Empire grew by the violent power of domination, by conquering people and lands. At its peak in A.D. 100 Roman rule had spread over all the lands bordering the Mediterranean Sea —on the west was Spain; the east boundary reached to Syria. Northward on the map are the British Isles; and to the south, the Roman Empire conquered the north coast of Africa. The Roman Empire controlled both the land and the sea. This is significant because the important work of moving the military, slaves, goods and animals over water was easier than moving over land.

South of Syria is the very small area, called the land of Israel, where Jesus lived. While the events which happened in the land of Israel were not important to the Roman leaders, those events are very important to us.

Roman Empire

The Roman Empire grew because it conquered people—killed people, took slaves, stole, burned and destroyed property when necessary—and then claimed that land as its own.

The people of the Roman Empire spoke many languages and followed a variety of religions and customs. This becomes obvious when we reflect on the size of the empire. The Roman religion and Roman laws which governed the people held the Empire together. Roman culture was brought to the different lands by the military and the leaders who ruled small sections of the lands Rome claimed. While the different peoples could keep some aspects of their lives the same as before the Romans arrived, other aspects changed because of the insistence of the Romans.

The enormous size of the Roman Empire helped to bring about its downfall in A. D. 476.

Clothing

Both men and women wore an inner garment called a tunic which hung to the knees. Over the tunic men wore a toga. Togas were usually white and were draped over the shoulders like a sheet. Women wore a palla, which was sometimes dyed but was also draped like a sheet over the tunic. Different classes of people in Roman society wore different colors and styles. Class distinction was very clear.

Slavery

Wealth was sometimes determined by how many slaves were part of the household. Slaves were usually prisoners of war. Slavery was a necessary part of the Roman Empire. The wealthy needed slaves to do the manual labor that is part of even basic living—cooking, cleaning, laundry, shopping. Sometimes slaves were treated kindly. When a slave owner died he or she might give the slaves their freedom.

Often slaves were treated harshly. Slaves might taste a new food in case it was poisonous. Slaves might be killed if they made a mistake or if the owner made a mistake but wanted to blame someone else. Slaves did the horrible, dangerous work in salt and metal mines. Government slaves worked for the city building roads, buildings and in other city-wide projects.

Sometimes slaves prayed to die so harsh was their life. Children born to slaves were also slaves. The willingness to dominate other people to the point of making them slaves tells us much about the Roman Empire.

Roads

Roman roads were well built; some still existing today. Smooth stone was laid on a foundation of gravel and sand. Engineers did the planning; soldiers did the work. This marvel of Roman engineering made traveling easy. The military could move quickly to conquer new lands. War loot and trade items could be brought back to Rome to satisfy the desires of the emperors. Roman roads also allowed Christians to carry their message of salvation throughout the Empire.

Military

The military was an extremely important part of the Roman Empire. The Roman Empire continued to expand until about A. D. 100. This meant a strong military had to be ready to conquer new lands by killing people and taking slaves. It then needed to protect its new borders from invaders. Soldiers in the military were required to give their lives for the empire and to worship whoever was the emperor. Professional soldiers signed up for 16-20 years. After 20 years they were given farmland for their own use. When soldiers were not fighting, they built roads, buildings and aqueducts.

Buildings

Rome was a massive, crowded, busy place. Emperors lived in beautiful palaces with mosaics and marble brought by boat from around the world. Poor people lived in large, crowded apartment buildings holding many separate apartments. The center of Rome, called the Forum, was open space for buying, selling, the informal meetings of senators, and for friends and business men to meet. Around the forum were huge buildings: the Senate House, law courts, and buildings for bankers and traders.

Roman Gods

There was a roman god to be worshipped for each part of life: healing, music, agriculture, a mother's love, nature, childbirth, hunting, travels, profit, war, learning, sea, beauty, even horse racing. Sacrifices of incense, food and animals were offered (burned) at the temples and in homes. Emperors also wanted to be worshipped as gods.

Roman Coins

Coins were more than a unit of exchange for goods or work. Coins were also propaganda, telling who was emperor, who had the power and wealth.

Food

The food of slaves and the poor was very simple: porridge, bread, cheese, olives and fruit. Poor people usually didn't have stoves so they ate cold food or bought hot food from shops. Wealthy people, like the emperors, loved to eat. An evening meal might start with eggs, vegetables and cheese. Pork, lamb or fowl would be served next. Dessert would likely be fruit and honey-cakes. Banquets, or large, elaborate dinner parties, would have entertainment like jugglers, dancers and musicians.

Many people were so poor the emperors had to bring grain all the way from Egypt to give to them. This was another way the emperor kept his 'subjects' happy.

Entertainment and Games

Entertainment was an important part of life in the Roman Empire. The Emperors wanted to keep the people of the empire happy so the people would like the emperor and would not riot or complain. Sports events and theatrical plays were held in arenas, theatres and amphitheatres. Unfortunately, many popular events involved killing wild beasts brought from around the world and killing human beings. Sometimes this meant trained fighters fought against each other. Under Emperors who disliked Christianity, the martyrdom of many Christians was public entertainment. In A. D. 70 the Great Coliseum, which still exists in Rome, was completed. It was dedicated in A. D. 80.

Government

Government refers to the system of laws, the way laws of the region are made and kept. The people who make rules (or laws) have the power to make decisions in another person's life. The government of the Roman Empire changed over its long history. SPQR, a motto of the empire means "The Senate and the People of Rome" (the senators work for the empire by helping the common people make decisions). But this was essentially a false notion. By the first century hereditary rule was the norm. This means that the man in power had a son or chose an heir to lead. The man in power did what was necessary to remain in power for as long as possible. Emperors ruled for life but with many men desiring the power to rule assassination was common. Only wealthy men could have even the faintest hope of reaching even the smallest position of power. The Emperor had all the power and shared it by consulting others only if he wanted to, when he wanted and why he wanted. Hereditary rule for life feeds suspicion, vying, competition, and deception. Despite all this Roman rule was the best the world had seen.

This card is about the Roman Empire but belongs with the second box of Early Christians which is Box 4

Offering Incense and the Certificate of Sacrifice

Beginning in the first century Roman citizens were required to burn a pinch of incense to Caesar, the Roman ruler, to show their allegiance or loyalty to their country and emperor. But Christians couldn't offer incense, it would be idolatry; they worshipped only Jesus. Fortunately, this extreme Roman law was not always enforced. Around the year A. D. 250 Emperor Decius required that all citizens obtain a certificate proving fulfillment of the 'religious duty'. Christians found without this certificate were sent to work in mines or were sentenced to death.

Life of Jesus Box 2

Emperor Tiberius

The men who ruled the entire Roman Empire are called Emperors. Sometimes emperors are called Caesar, after an especially important emperor, Augustus Caesar. Emperor Tiberius ruled during Jesus' lifetime, A. D. 14 to 37. The dates are seen on his 'reign marker' which is placed on the timeline. Emperor Tiberius helped to shape, or carried forth Roman culture.

Crib

The simple crib or manger reminds us of Jesus' birth. Jesus was born in a stable; because his parents were poor, he too was poor and that means he was without worldly power.

Icon of the Baptism of Jesus

The baptism of Jesus in all four Gospels refers to Jesus as the Son of God or the Lamb of God. These titles refer back to the prophet Isaiah's Suffering Servant of God, the Lamb who did not fight back. (See Is. 53: 4-12).

Quote on Love of Enemies

In His Sermon on the Mount, found in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke, we read some of Jesus' exact words: "Love your enemies." Through all the experiences of life the early Christian community understood Jesus' words to mean exactly what they say. Those who follow Jesus are to love their enemies in the same total way Jesus loved His enemies.

Jesus Enters Jerusalem on a Donkey

When Jesus entered Jerusalem He rode a donkey. The donkey was the opposite of what a powerful, worldly leader would ride (a beautiful, expensive horse or chariot). Once again Jesus is showing us who He really is: a leader who uses a power different from the power of the conquering political or military hero.

Last Supper Icon

A significant event in the life of Jesus is the Last Supper. Jesus gives Himself as the Bread of Life. He gave us exactly what we need to grow in grace and Holy Love so that we can live Nonviolent Love as He did. Jesus gave Himself to us completely.

Crucifix

The supreme act of giving Himself—as the action of love even for enemies—is shown in Jesus' death on the cross. Jesus' death on the cross put an end to the need to use violence as a way to get rid of problems, threats, or any aspect of evil. Loving to the point of dying, if necessary, is the way to conquer evil.

Empty Tomb

The Truth of who Jesus is and what Jesus said is clear to us when we find the tomb empty. Jesus' way of loving to the point of death, if necessary, is successful. God's loving care is released when we love and follow us beyond death. Death is not the serious concern for the Christian. Fighting evil the way Jesus fought evil is the concern for the Follower of Jesus Christ. Jesus rose to eternal life. As followers of His Way, we will rise to eternal life, too.

Pentecost Icon

The energy and power of the Holy Spirit came to those in the Upper Room as tongues of fire. The disciples were filled with the power of Holy Love. They became filled with the new life of Jesus. From this experience the disciples were ready to begin their amazing work of bringing the True and Complete Jesus to the world.

Peter Put Up Your Sword

Jesus refused armed defense for himself in His most intense moment of suffering. Jesus rejected the use of violence in every situation. The early Christian Community understood that Jesus meant all armed defense in any possible situation is the opposite of Jesus' life and teaching. Jesus' Kingdom uses the stronger power of serving and suffering love to conquer evil.

Father Forgive Them

Whether these words were actually said or not is not important. These words convey what Jesus has in His heart at all times. Jesus always wants to forgive whatever needs to be forgiven. There is no one with whom a Christian cannot reconcile. When Christians can forgive anything, which we are called to do and capable of doing with God's grace, there is never a reason for violence or retaliation. True peace is possible even when it seems unimaginable.

Icon of St. Peter

After Pentecost, Peter traveled through parts of the Roman Empire proclaiming the Gospel and building up the Christian community. Jesus said to Peter, "I will give you the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven" (MT 16:16-18). This means Peter held a special position of leadership amongst the Christian community. Through the power of the Holy Spirit Peter and Cornelius, a Roman centurion, met each other. Through their conversations both Peter and Cornelius grew into, or it can be said, were converted into a fuller relationship with Christ.

Box 3 The First Christians

St. Stephen's Martyrdom

In the Temple of Jerusalem Stephen witnessed to and preached the saving power of Jesus. The listeners refused to accept Stephen's message. They forced him out of the city where they could kill him by throwing stones. As he was dying Stephen followed Jesus' example by begging God to forgive those who were killing him. He said, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them" (Acts 7:60).

Stephen is the first person in the Christian community to give his life as a sign of his love for Jesus. This means Stephen became a martyr, a witness to Jesus' Nonviolent Love. It happened one year after Pentecost.

Icon of St. Paul—

One man who watched and supported the stoning of St. Stephen was Saul. The power of the Holy Spirit in Stephen to forgive those who were killing him is the same power that Saul later accepted into his heart. Even though Saul supported the killing of St. Stephen, because of his conversion, (changing his mind and heart to the mind and heart of Jesus) St. Paul and St. Stephen are now in heaven together. St. Paul became a Nonviolent Follower of Jesus and worked for many years building up the Christian community. He wrote many letters to the communities he visited. We now call these letters Epistles and find them in the New Testament.

Map of St. Paul's Journeys Spreading the Gospel

Between A. D. 46 and A. D. 57 St. Paul took three missionary journeys to build the Christian community by preaching the life and teaching of Jesus. He took a last voyage to Rome for his trial sometime between A. D. 59 and A. D. 62. Paul died under Emperor Nero.

Oral to Written Tradition

During the first half of the first century, Jesus' Love, Power and Presence were experienced by His followers. Then the story of that experience was told to the followers who had never met Jesus. Later some followers started to write down the treasured story. The first writings were composed in Greek by Paul around A. D. 50; the last were written by A. D.100. Much later, in A. D. 367, the leaders of the Church agreed on what to consider Sacred Scripture out of all the important writings of the first few centuries. The chart below shows when each of the four Gospels was written.

Mark	c. A. D. 65
Matthew	c. A. D. 70-80
Luke (& Acts)	c. A. D. 70-80
John	c. A. D. 90

The books for Matthew, Luke, Acts, and John are kept in the 4th box. There is not a second **content card** but a second copy **of this card**-one for Box 3 and one for Box 4.

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Church Plaque

At some point followers of Jesus were given a name—Christians—and the word ‘we’ is used to signify a group. Eventually that ‘we’ referring to the group called Christians was called ‘the Church’.

Be Compassionate

The disciples, filled with the Holy Spirit, which is the power and presence of Jesus, continued living and teaching, BEING the presence of Jesus. The disciples passed on Jesus’ message of how to bring healing to the world, be the life of Jesus on earth.

We Must Obey God Rather Than Humans

When there is a difference between the human authority and God the Christian follows God. God is the ultimate authority, God is Truth. Even when the government, or we might say “the state” tells us to act a certain way, or implies we should feel or think a certain way the Christian always keeps the “mind of Christ”, the love of the Father as the measure, the guide of how to think feel and act.

Emperor Nero

Emperor Nero was a particularly power-hungry, self-centered emperor. To achieve his goals he murdered anyone necessary, including his mother, brother, teacher and two wives. Historians debate whether Emperor Nero started the tremendous fire of A. D. 64, which destroyed a large part of Rome. Emperor Nero blamed the fire on Christians and began persecuting them. He declared it unlawful to be a Christian. He ordered crucifixions and sent Christians dressed in animal skins into the arena to be killed by dogs.

St. Peter's Martyrdom

After Pentecost, Peter traveled about proclaiming the Gospel and building up the Christian community. The last part of Peter's life was probably spent in Rome. He died around A. D. 64 during Emperor Nero's persecution of Christians.

First Martyrs of the Church of Rome

The First Martyrs of Rome are the nameless Christians who were killed by Emperor Nero in Rome. The Christians were blamed and condemned for the fire which destroyed much of Rome. Historians doubt Christians had anything to do with setting the fire. Tacitus, the Roman historian, and St. Clement of Rome referred to August 15, A. D. 64 as a night of horror. Christians, sent into the arena dressed in animal skins, became food for starved beasts.

St. Paul's Martyrdom

During the persecution of Christians by Emperor Nero, Paul was arrested and beheaded. This happened in Rome around the year A. D. 67 on the same day as St. Peter's martyrdom.

Liturgy

The early Christians came together in their communities to celebrate a weekly liturgy. This included reading Hebrew Scripture, proclaiming the life and teaching of Jesus, saying prayers, singing hymns, Psalm recital, offering petitions and reciting a creed. A second part of the liturgy involved sharing the real presence of Jesus in the bread and wine. Sharing in the Eucharist symbolizes the unity of all Christians in one bread and one body.

Community

The early Christians each had a deep love for Jesus and a desire to follow His Way. But each Christian never thought of herself or himself as alone, in a private friendship with Jesus. The Christians had a strong awareness of how God gave them Jesus as a brother. That meant Christians were brother and sister to each other—everyone was connected to the same loving Father. This had a powerful impact on life. The struggles of daily life were lived out together. Everyone lived with and for the other. There never needed to be a child of God suffering alone or without his or her daily needs met. Love, food, clothing and shelter were available for everyone. We call this kind of care and service to each other ‘community’.

A child can look up Acts of the Apostles 4:32-35 which tells us what the community attempted to live: “The community of believers was of one heart and mind, and no one claimed that any of his possessions was his own, but they had everything in common. . . There was no needy person among them, for those who owned property or houses would sell them, bring the proceeds of the sale, and put them at the feet of the apostles, and they were distributed to each according to need.”

Catacombs

Catacombs are the cemeteries of the early Church. Often graves in the catacombs were placed close to the grave of an important martyr in the hope that the important martyr would intercede for those around him or her. The catacombs are filled with early Christian art—powerful signs of love, faith and hope in the Life and Resurrection of Jesus.

Box 4

This box holds all the Gospels (except Mark), Acts, Didache and Apostolic Tradition

Some of the catacomb pictures belong with Box 3 and some with Box 4

Sign of the Fish

When the Christians were persecuted they went into hiding. They secretly continued to gather together, celebrate the Breaking of the Bread (Eucharist), care for each other and enjoy fellowship. As a way of showing the way for those Christians looking for the planned meeting place, the fish shape (like a secret symbol) was drawn in the dirt, the nose of the fish pointing the direction. The fish shape was chosen because the Greek letters of the word “fish” are the first letters in the words *Jesus Christ, God’s Son, Savior*. Thus, the fish was an important early Christian symbol.

Scripture Plaques

The teaching of Jesus continued by the disciples remained true and strong. The early Christians through the first three centuries lived nonviolently or repented for using what Jesus rejected. The life of the Christian was to be a life of loving service in joy, humility, mercy towards all and dependence on God.

Christ in Disarming Peter

Early in the third century the understanding of what Jesus meant by ‘love as I have loved’ and ‘love your enemies’ was still consistent with how Jesus acted while on earth—love completely, be willing to reconcile with anyone and everyone and depend on God alone. There was no reason to pick up, make or use what Jesus never picked up, made or used-weapons. Nor was there a reason or witness to have going on in one’s mind or heart the thoughts and emotions of someone getting ready to pick up, make or use weapons.

Idolatry

At times the religion of the Roman Empire was a problem for Christians who believed in Jesus, the Only Son of the God. Christians would not worship the gods or the emperors of the Roman world. Many people thought Christians put the empire in danger by not making the gods happy with the offering of sacrifices. This is part of the reason Christians were persecuted.

Coliseum and Lion

A coliseum is a large outdoor stadium used for games and other entertainments. During the persecutions the emperors would put Christians in the Coliseum with fierce, hungry dogs or lions.

Early Christian Writings

Hundreds of years before the leaders of the Church decided what would be included in the New Testament, Christians wrote down their thoughts and experiences of the Risen Christ; they put the revelation of Jesus as the Nonviolent Son of God in writing. Those writings were then shared with different communities in cities throughout the Roman Empire. Two particularly important writings were the Didache (dĭd ə kē)—the Teaching of the Twelve from A. D. 100, and the Apostolic Tradition, sometimes called the Canon of Hippolytus (hĭp pŏl ĭ tŭs).

Agnus Dei with Quote

That which gives direction and courage to the Christian, the sign or standard for the Christian is the Agnus Dei. This is picture of what the mind of Jesus is like. And our rallying cry is Our Lamb has conquered—let us follow.

Emperor plaques—Emperor Tiberius is kept in the Life of Jesus Box because that is his time frame. Emperor Nero is kept in the Box 3 the first box of the Life of Christians. The rest of the emperor plaques can be kept in box 4.

Emperor Trajan

Emperor Trajan increased the size of the Roman Empire by conquering the lands we now call Eastern Europe and Asia Minor. Under Emperor Trajan Christians were not hunted. But, if Christians were turned in and questioned, they were killed if they did not give up their faith in Jesus and worship the Roman gods.

Emperor Marcus Aurelius

Emperor Marcus Aurelius was the most brutal emperor since Emperor Nero. In part this was because of the increased complaints against Christians. Widespread sickness, revolts and wars were blamed on the Christians. Christians were brought in for questioning about their willingness to worship the Roman gods and offer allegiance (loyalty) to Rome. Christians who remained faithful to Jesus were tortured and killed.

Emperor Septimius Severus

Emperor Septimius Severus increased the military power of the Roman Empire. During his reign it became a crime to encourage or become a convert to Christianity. There were local outbreaks of severe persecutions which Septimius Severus did not stop. One of these was in Northern Africa, in the city of Carthage where Perpetua and Felicity were killed.

Emperor Constantine

Emperor Constantine tolerated and legalized Christianity. Along with his plaque we place an Edict of Milan plaque
Let's remember: the sign or standard of the Romans is its flag with an eagle. When the Romans were in battle to increase or protect the empire the standard was carried to give direction and courage to the warriors.

Emperor Decius

Emperor Decius was a severe persecutor of Christians. He believed the Christians were responsible for the problems in the empire. He demanded that every citizen of the Roman Empire worship and appease (satisfy or please) the gods so that peace and good times would return. Origen tells us that Emperor Decius firmly desired to wipe out 'the very name of Christ everywhere.' Everyone thought to be a Christian was to be taken to a temple and asked to sacrifice. Those who did sacrifice to the gods were given a certificate. Those who refused were sentenced to harsh work in the salt and metal mines or were executed.

Emperor Valerian

When the terrible social problems of the Roman Empire became especially serious, Emperor Valerian thought part of the solution was to take property from Christians for the Empire to use or sell. He stopped Christians from meeting in, the catacombs, their cemeteries, where they prayed for their dead. He exiled all priests who would not sacrifice to the Roman gods. Later the priests were executed. During this time of trying to build up the wealth of the Empire, St. Lawrence was taken into court and ordered to bring back the wealth of the Church. When St. Lawrence brought back the poor and the sick, which he considered the wealth of the Church, he was executed.

Emperor Diocletian

When Emperor Diocletian came to power he wore a crown with pearls and demanded to be addressed as 'Most Holy Lord of the Universe'. Even though he was proud and self-centered he was tolerant of Christians. But, by the year 303 he completely changed his attitude which had deadly consequences for Christians.

At this time Christians made up a quarter of the population of the empire and had already begun to build large, public places of worship. Diocletian insisted that conscientious objectors, those who refuse to join the military, be executed. He also issued a decree (enacted a law) that had six serious parts for Christians: 1) places of Christian worship were to be destroyed, 2) anyone holding a Christian service was to be executed, 3) all Christian books were to be gathered and burned, 4) all Christian property was to be taken away, 5) all Christian freemen (non-slaves) were not allowed to get government jobs, 6) all Christian slaves would lose the right to ever be free.

For your reference:

EMPERORS

Tiberius	A.D. 14-37
Nero.....	A.D. 54-68
Domitian	A.D. 81-96
Trajan	A.D. 98-117
Marcus Aurelius.....	A.D. 161-180
Septimius Severus.....	A.D. 193-211
Decius	A.D. 249-251
Valerian.....	A.D. 253-260
Diocletian.....	A.D. 284-305
Constantine	A.D. 306-337

The cards for the Martyrs are kept with the Martyr stones and Agnus Dei pieces. These can be presented as a group (and stored in their own box) or in sequence with the other materials. These are presented carefully—sensitive to the children. We must remember that persecution was periodic and localized—it was not constant. Though what the martyrs went through was horrible there was, at times, joy and bravery in service and suffering. There was at times a powerful witness through the community. True martyrs did not want suffering—BUT they were willing each day to take the next step in serving and loving Jesus. At some point that next step included dying—as it will for each of us some day.

Ignatius of Antioch

“I am the wheat of Christ, ground by the teeth of beasts to become pure bread.” While on the way to his execution in Rome Ignatius of Antioch wrote these words in the sixth of his seven letters to the early Christian communities. While on that trip to Rome, Bishop Ignatius met with Bishop Polycarp who was then a young man.

Ignatius of Antioch’s meaningful letters tell us of life during the first century after Jesus’ Ascension. From these letters we learn of the importance of the unity of Christians meeting for the Eucharist. The most well-known letter, sent to Rome before he arrived, asked that the Christians there not prevent his execution in the arena games: “Let me follow the example of the suffering of my God.”

Polycarp

Polycarp was taught by John the Apostle and is a link from the apostles in the first century to the disciples of the second century. As a young man Bishop Polycarp was fortunate to witness Ignatius of Antioch’s great faith as Ignatius traveled to his execution. The *Martyrdom of Polycarp* is the first authentic narrative (story) of martyrdom after St. Stephen’s. This story records how the 86 year old Polycarp went to his death in the amphitheatre.

Justin

Justin converted from paganism around the age of 30. He traveled throughout the Roman Empire proclaiming the Gospel. Justin's writings are some of the earliest writings that still exist. Through his writings we have the earliest descriptions of the baptismal rite and the Eucharist. His trial under the official Rusticus is a genuine historical document. When he was commanded to sacrifice to the gods he said, "No right-minded man forsakes truth for falsehood." His companions said, "Do with us as you will. We are Christians, and we cannot sacrifice to idols." Justin died in Rome under Emperor Marcus Aurelius.

Martyrs of Lyons (present day France)

There were many martyrs under Emperor Marcus Aurelius in the year 177. We have record of 48 names. The famous Church historian Eusebius recorded the story. A young slave girl, Blandina, was the last to die. Though she was tortured for several days she never gave up her faith in Jesus Christ.

Felicity

Felicity was a young, pregnant slave girl who was baptized while under house arrest with Perpetua. She went into labor and had a baby girl while in jail. The baby was taken away to be raised by another Christian. Felicity and Perpetua helped each other through the terrible time in the arena. Both were killed by the sword.

Cyprian

Cyprian converted to Christianity around the age of 46. Within a short time he was made the bishop of Carthage, a city in Northern Africa. During the persecution of Emperor Decius, Cyprian went into hiding so he could continue to live and take care of his people. Cyprian confronted improper teachings (heresies) and had disagreements with the Pope. But these issues were not resolved. When the outbreak of the plague was blamed on the Christians, Cyprian was put to death.

Perpetua

Perpetua was a married woman with a young child. When she was placed under 'house arrest', her baby was taken away to be raised by another Christian. House arrest meant she was locked in a private home. Perpetua and the other catechumens with her were baptized while under house arrest. Then they were sent to jail.

While in jail Perpetua had visions of a ladder to heaven. She saw herself arrive into heaven. She knew she had been happy on earth but she was happier still in heaven. Right before she died, Perpetua wrote some of the story of her martyrdom. She was sent to the arena but the beasts did not kill her. She and Felicity, a slave companion, helped each other while in the arena. They were later killed with a sword. This happened in Carthage, in Northern Africa.

Lawrence

When Lawrence was a deacon, a Roman official told him to hand over the valuables of the Church. So Lawrence gathered together the poor and the sick, the beloved treasures of God, to bring to the official. For this he was martyred. Since the fourth century St. Lawrence has been the most venerated martyr of the city of Rome.

Maximilian

As the son of a Roman soldier Maximilian was expected to join the army like his father. But Maximilian had become a Christian; he wanted to love his enemies. No one could force him to change his mind. "I am a Christian. I cannot fight. I cannot do what is wrong." Maximilian was executed under Emperor Maximian.

Lucy

Lucy became a martyr under Emperor Diocletian. Soon after her death she was venerated; her name is listed in the First Eucharistic Prayer of the Roman Mass. The name Lucy is connected to the word light. Many people with eye problems ask Lucy to bring their prayer to God for them.